

MHS Digital Volunteers -- Transcription tips for Charles F. Morse papers

Document created 8/18/25

These tips relate to transcribing the documents featured in the Massachusetts Historical Society's crowdsourcing website for the Charles F. Morse papers project:

<https://www.masshist.org/mymhs/projecthub/project/1>

In general, transcribe as you see, without editing for 21st-century grammar/spelling. Use capital letters as Morse uses them and spell words as Morse spells the words. Transcribed content should reflect exactly what is on the page. Full transcription guidelines are available here: <https://www.masshist.org/mymhs/transcription-guide>.

Do not make line-by-line transcriptions. Let the lines wrap around automatically, unless there is an obvious paragraph break. When a new paragraph begins, do not indent it. Do not leave horizontal spaces in the transcription, even when Morse leaves a space between lines.

Ignore any underlining, that is, do not make a note that something is underlined.

If you come across a small sketch, drawing, or map, you can note it thus in the text: [sketch] or [map] or [drawing]. The reader can refer to the sketch/map/drawing to see what it is. You do not need to describe the sketch/map/drawing. Example in Box 1, Folder 2, Image 1:

The screenshot displays the MHS transcription interface. On the left, a 'Transcribe' panel shows the transcription of a letter dated [1861-08-05] from Maryland Hts Aug 5th 1861, addressed to 'Dear Mother'. The transcription text reads: 'We still are in the place my last letter was dated from but instead of being in tents we are bivouacking again. Last Thursday afternoon the order came, that as we were the advanced guard we should not have our wagons and baggage liable to being cut off. Everything was moved off in a hurry, and the men set to work building shelters of bushes, in this way [two sketches] they are built like [deleted: a] long sheds, have posts every little distance, rafters and string pieces connecting them. For the reason that we have two architects at the head of our company, ours was the soonest and best built. Capt. Curtis and I had an [break]'. Below the transcription are checkboxes for 'This transcription is completed' and 'Reviewed', and buttons for 'Save & keep working' and 'Save & close'. On the right, the main view shows the original handwritten letter with the same text. The letter is dated 'Maryland Hts Aug 5th 1861' and is addressed to 'Dear Mother'. It contains two small sketches of long sheds with posts and rafters. The interface includes a top navigation bar with 'Review completed', 'Edit', 'History', and 'Discussion' tabs, and a bottom toolbar with 'review', 'request reproduction', and other icons.

When transcribing, pay attention to the little marks around the words-- they might just be part of the word!